

The Pulse

Summer 2022



Adapting to a Changing Community

According to the 2020 Census, Washington state's population has increased by 14.6% since 2010. That's nearly double the nation's growth rate for the same time period. More detailed population information will not be available until after June 30. However, there are many indicators suggesting that the increase for our area will be the same or greater.

Your north-end fire departments have been getting busier. Across

both districts, calls for service are up 12% over the last five years (2017 – 2021). The population is changing with the arrival of assisted living and other medical facilities. The agencies are doing all they can to meet current needs and plan for the future.

To preserve levels of service, Poulsbo Fire Department plans to build a new station on the Viking Way corridor, and North Kitsap Fire & Rescue is working to replace its

Suquamish fire station which is the district's only building that wasn't designed to withstand earthquakes.

Calls for service are up 12%

Safe and well-positioned facilities are important, but it's firefighters in reliable ambulances and fire engines who answer the increasing calls for help. Both districts are hiring firefighters to fill the vacancies created by retirements and promotions, reduce the cost of overtime and maintain staffing levels.

Fire districts don't receive on-going funding from federal, state or local government and rely primarily on local property taxes to pay for operations and capital purchases. Voter-approved citizen initiatives have resulted in caps on property tax increases, so fire district revenues do not rise at the same rate as assessed valuations. Even though assessed valuations have been increasing at a dramatic pace, fire district tax revenues have not.



Scan this code with a smart phone to get more information about property taxes and levy lids.

Continued inside

Also In This Issue:

Win Free Gift Certificates

Fire Station Open Houses

Power of Closed Doors

Wet Spring May Boost Fire Danger

The Pulse, published jointly at least once every year, is one of many cooperative efforts between your two local fire departments:



911 NE Liberty Rd Poulsbo, WA 98370
(360)779-3997
www.poulsbofire.org
@poulsbofire facebook/poulsbofire

**NORTH KITSAP
FIRE & RESCUE**

26642 Miller Bay Rd NE Kingston, WA 98346
(360)297-3619
www.nkfr.org
@nkfandr facebook/nkfire

Changing Community

Continued from front page

Learn more about levy limitations at the Washington State Department of Revenue website: <https://dor.wa.gov/forms-publications/publications-subject/tax-topics/property-tax-how-one-percent-property-tax-levy-limit-works>. Or, use a smart phone to scan the QR code on the front page.

What about revenue from new construction? It appears that recent increases in home prices and total assessed valuation (AV) have been due to limited supply and overwhelming demand for homes. New construction still hasn't recovered to the levels experienced prior to the 2008 - 2009 housing crash. In 2021, new construction lifted the two districts' AV by about \$85 million - less than half of the pre-crash high.

In the first year that new construction is added to the tax rolls,

After the first year on the tax rolls, the value of new construction becomes part of the total assessed valuation (AV) and, because the AV is increasing, the district's levy rates are lowered to keep the total levy within the state-mandated limits on tax increases.

it is levied at the previous year's tax rates. In 2021, this resulted in the districts receiving a combined \$164,000 (or about 0.8% of their budgets) in additional revenue from new construction. However, that's only in the first year. After that, the value of new construction becomes part of the total AV and, because the AV is increasing, the district's tax rates are lowered to keep the total collection within the levy limitations.

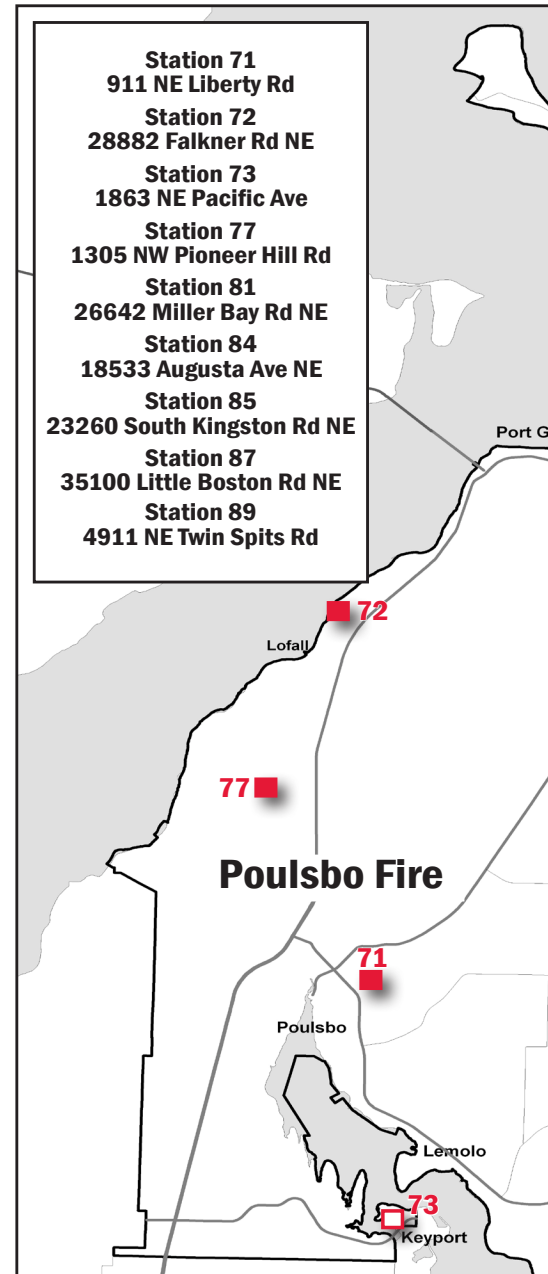
When the public approved levy limitations, they made it clear that they wanted the chance to vote on revenue requests. So, to meet current needs and prepare for the future, both fire districts are developing funding proposals for the fall 2022 general election.

Find out more about these issues online at the fire districts' websites or call our offices during regular business hours.

Mark Your Cal

We've missed hosting events and visiting schools, so we're really looking forward to celebrating National Fire Prevention Week 2022 in a big way with open houses, contests and school visits during the whole month of October.

The nation's oldest public health observance, Fire Prevention Week was established in



**Burn Ban Information Line
(360)297-4888**

Wet Spring May Lead to Greater Fire Danger

This spring's cold and wet weather has delayed the start of wildland fire season, but when summer weather finally arrives the conditions may be even more dangerous than in a typical season. All of that moisture encouraged unusually abundant growth in the region's vegetation. This means that when warm and dry conditions sap moisture from the landscape, there will be more fuel to burn than usual.

Keep a close eye on conditions, watch our websites for updated information and use care with all ignition sources.



Poulsbo Fire

Service Area: 54 square miles
Population Served: 26,897 (2020 OFM Estimate)
2021 Expense Budget: \$10.1 million
2021 Total Calls: 4,243
2021 Medical Calls: 2,993 (71%)
Civilian Employees: 6
Uniformed Employees: 46
Volunteers: 12
Fire Insurance Rating: 4
Fire Chief: Jim Gillard

Calendars; Fire Station Open Houses Return!

1922. The theme for this year's 100th observance, which runs from October 1 - 8, is close to our hearts: "Fire Won't Wait. Plan Your Escape."

Don't wait.
Plan your escape
at fpw.org.



We know it's early, and we know that our plans might have to change. Still, we hope you'll mark your calendars and watch for more details as the dates approach. We can't wait to see you!

Poulsbo Fire

Saturday, October 1 from 3 - 5 p.m.
Station 72
2882 Falkner Rd NE

Saturday, October 8 from 3 - 5 p.m.
Station 77
1305 NW Pioneer Hill Rd

Tuesday, October 11 from 6 - 8 p.m.
Station 73
1863 NE Pacific Ave (Keyport)

Saturday, October 15 from 3 - 5 p.m.
Station 71
911 NE Liberty Rd

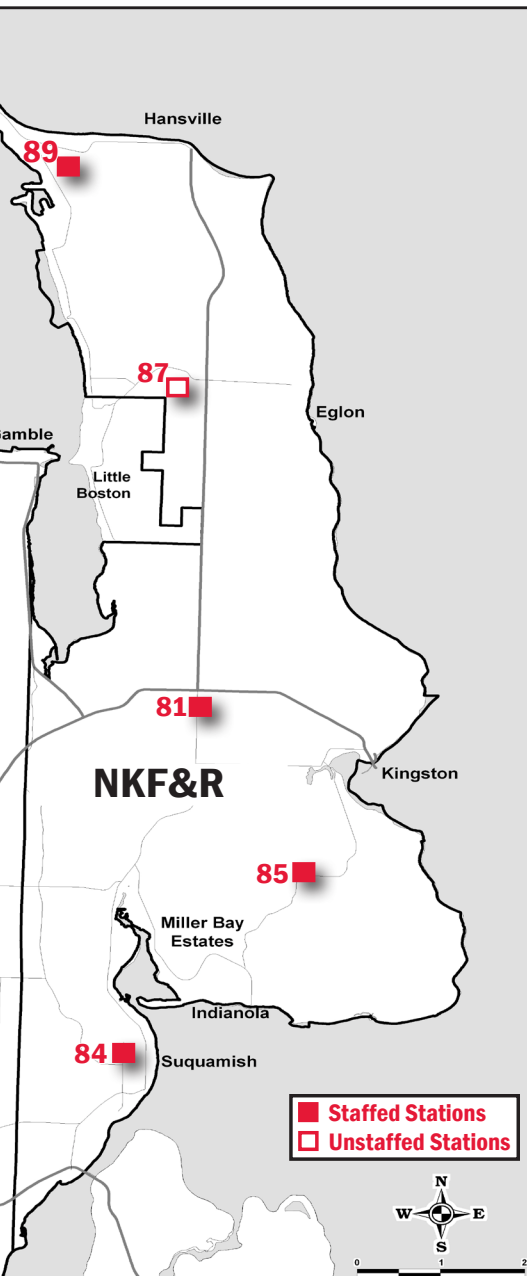
NKF&R

Wednesday, October 5 from 4 - 7 p.m.
Station 84
18533 Augusta Ave NE

Saturday, October 8 from 2 - 5 p.m.
Station 85
23260 S. Kingston Rd NE

Thursday, October 13 from 4 - 7 p.m.
Station 89
4911 NE Twin Spits Rd

Saturday, October 15 from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Station 81
26642 Miller Bay Rd NE



Kids Corner

There's something for everyone in each edition of The Pulse! This edition's Kids Corner Contest might require teamwork as you answer questions about this issue's content:

- 1. How many fire stations serve the northern part of Kitsap County?**
- 2. When is National Fire Prevention Week?**
- 3. What is the most common cause of wildland fire all year around? What about around the Fourth of July?**

NKF&R

Service Area: 46 square miles
 Population Served: 20,609 (2020 OFM Estimate)
 2021 Expense Budget: \$10.2 million
 2021 Total Calls: 3,360
 2021 Medical Calls: 2,279 (68%)
 Civilian Employees: 7
 Uniformed Employees: 48
 Volunteers: 11
 Fire Insurance Rating: 4
 Fire Chief: Dan Smith

Students from preschool through high school are eligible to enter. Submit answers via email to laboda@nkfr.org for a chance to win a \$5 gift certificate (not purchased with public funds but with firefighters' funds) to a local business. Entries are due by August 1 and will be judged on accuracy and completeness. If there are more than ten winning entries, firefighters will select certificate recipients in a random drawing.



Your Fire Department CARES

Fire CARES (Community Assistance, Referral and Education Service) is a unit staffed by an emergency medical technician and a social worker/substance use disorder professional, assisting individuals across greater North Kitsap. Skilled at identifying resources and navigating the complex array of public and private resources, the CARES team helps ensure the most appropriate care for individuals whose needs aren't best met with a 9-1-1 response.



Julie, left, and Dave, right, are the current CARES team.

CARES gets referrals from police, fire, school counselors and social service agencies. The team helps resolve transportation-related issues, sets up doctor's

appointments, seeks housing for the unsheltered, arranges for mental health assessments and appointments, establishes in-home assistance provided by appropriate agencies or community partners, and much more.

Although CARES began with a focus on mental health and substance use/

abuse issues, the team's reach has also extended to the aging members of our community – many of whom are in need of multiple services. In fact, of the 340 individuals assisted by the team in 2021, 45% were over the age of 65.

Resourceful and compassionate, CARES team members devise solutions that better benefit those served while also keeping first responders available for more immediate emergencies.

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Wildfire CAN Happen Here

Though occurring less frequently than in the east, wildland fires west of the Cascades tend to be more severe due to greater fuel load and more populated areas. Community members can do a lot to prevent and prepare for these incidents.

Wildfire is preventable; escaped outdoor fires are the leading cause except around the Fourth of July holiday when fireworks take over as the most common spark for wildland fires. You can do your part by avoiding these and other ignition sources as fire danger rises.

You can prepare your home and property to be more wildfire-resistant, too. Find tips, how-to info and checklists online at www.firewise.org



Members of NKFR's wildland team shared their experience and other important info on Wildfire Community Preparedness Day in May.



In a June fire near Suquamish, a closed door between this bedroom ...



... and this space protected the living room as well as the rest of the house from smoke and heat.

What a Door Can Do

In a fire, a closed door can make the difference between a fire that's spreading rapidly through the home and a fire that's contained to its room of origin, depriving it of the air flow it needs to grow.

A closed door can make the difference between life and death, providing a

barrier between an occupant and a growing blaze's smoke and heat.

CL  **SE**
BEFORE YOU DOZE

Consider sleeping with your bedroom doors closed and, in the event that fire strikes, think about closing doors as the last person exits the structure. See videos and learn more at www.closeyourdoor.org.

FIRE COMMISSIONERS

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North Kitsap Fire & Rescue	Poulsbo Fire Department
Patrick Pearson, Chair (pearson@nkfr.org)	Jeff Uberuaga, Chair (juberuaga@poulsbofire.org)
Gillian Gregory (gregory@nkfr.org)	David Ellingson (dellingson@poulsbofire.org)
John Huntington (huntington@nkfr.org)	Jim Ingalls (jingalls@poulsbofire.org)
Stephen Neupert (neupert@nkfr.org)	Darryl Milton (dmilton@poulsbofire.org)
Wilson Stewart (stewart@nkfr.org)	Chris Quinn (cquinn@poulsbofire.org)